

NewsRelease

National Aeronautics and
Space Administration

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NOTE TO EDITORS

NASA LANGLEY MEDIA AVAILABILITY AFTER SECOND MARS LANDING

The second of two Mars Exploration Rover (MER) spacecraft, "Opportunity," will land on the surface of Mars at 12:05 a.m. EST on Jan. 25 after a seven-month trip from Earth. No later than Sunday evening, MER controllers at NASA Jet Propulsion Laboratory, in Pasadena, Calif., hope to hear the first signals from the spacecraft indicating a successful landing

On Jan. 26 from 1-2 p.m. at NASA Langley, a MER spokesperson will be available to address Langley's role in the Mars Exploration Rover (MER) mission. This will likely include how Langley helped fine-tune the entry, descent and landing sequence from the understanding gained from the raw data collected from 'Spirit,' which landed on Mars on Jan. 3. Based on observations of the first landing, JPL and Langley engineers may decide to alter the spacecraft trajectory or adjust the timing of one or more landing events for "Opportunity."

NASA Langley's support of the MER entry, descent and landing system has substantially expanded the Center's traditional planetary exploration roles of capsule flight dynamics, aerodynamics and aeroheating. In addition, Langley supported the MER mission in areas of parachute analyses and testing, multi-body trajectory simulation and spacecraft assembly, test and launch operations.

Interested news media should call Eden Fenigsohn at 864-2961 to arrange for access onto NASA Langley and escort to the newsroom.

For information and images regarding Mars Exploration Rover (MER) on the Internet, visit:
<http://www.jpl.nasa.gov/mer>

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